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N E W S R E L E A S E

Louisiana's unemployment rate continues to fall

BATON ROUGE – Seasonally adjusted data released by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) indicates that the Louisiana unemployment rate continued its decrease, down to 5.3 percent for July 2017. The last time the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.3 percent was September of 2008. Additionally, the over-the-year seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased by 0.9 percentage points from July 2016. The over-the-year drop is the largest since May 2014. The over the month rate declined by 0.1 percent from the June revised* unemployment rate of 5.4.

The total seasonally adjusted nonfarm jobs increased by 11,800 to 1,982,200 from the July 2016 seasonally adjusted figure of 1,970,400. This increase marks the third consecutive over-the-year gain in jobs. When compared to the June 2017 figure 1,988,100, seasonally adjusted nonfarm jobs saw a decrease of approximately 5,900 jobs.

Total seasonally adjusted private-sector jobs, when compared to July 2016 figures, increased by 15,400 to 1,661,500. The number of seasonally adjusted private-sector jobs decreased by 2,900 jobs from June 2017. Despite the over-the-month decrease, the private-sector has showed job gains in five out of the last eight months.

“Strong over-the-year job gains continue to push Louisiana’s economy in a positive direction,” said Ava Dejoie, Executive Director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC). “With the unemployment rate now having declined for nine consecutive months, we believe we are on the path to recovery.”

Seasonally adjusted data showed that the number of unemployed individuals decreased by 4,892 from the June 2017 figure of 114,864 to 109,972. This figure was down 20,914 from the July 2016 data. The number of seasonally adjusted employed individuals was 1,982,259; which showed a decrease of 11,079 from the June 2017 figure of 1,993,338.

The seasonally adjusted civilian labor force, or the number of people who are employed in addition to those looking for work, decreased by 15,971 from June 2017 to 2,092,231.

Industries that showed the largest gains for seasonally adjusted jobs:

- **Construction** gained 1,700 jobs for the month and is up 13,900 jobs for the year. The construction sector is currently at all-time high employment.
- **Other services**, which includes industries engaged in activities such as equipment and machinery repair and services, gained 300 jobs for the month and is up 2,000 jobs for the year.

Among other seasonally adjusted sectors in July:

- **Financial Activities** gained 300 jobs for the month and is up 100 jobs for the year.
- **Mining and Logging**, which includes industries in the oil and gas sector, has seen a decline of 600 jobs for the month and the jobs for the year is down by 2,700.

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Among Louisiana's metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), seasonally adjusted data showed:

- Alexandria lost 100 jobs from June 2017 and is down 700 jobs from July 2016.
- Baton Rouge gained 100 jobs from June 2017 and is up 1,600 jobs from July 2016.
- Houma lost 900 jobs from June 2017 and is down 3,000 jobs from July 2016.
- Lafayette lost 200 jobs from June 2017 and is down 2,200 jobs from July 2016.
- Lake Charles gained 1,200 jobs from June 2017 and is up 5,800 jobs from July 2016. The Lake Charles MSA has had over-the-year increases for 73 consecutive months.
- Monroe lost 200 jobs from June 2017, but is up 1,100 jobs from July 2016. The Monroe MSA has had 10 straight over-the-year increases.
- New Orleans lost 4,900 jobs from June 2017 and is down 500 jobs from July 2016.
- Shreveport lost 1,100 jobs from June 2017 and is down 2,900 jobs from July 2016.

The BLS does not report seasonally adjusted data for Hammond, due to the fact that it is a recently designated MSA, and has not yet had time to acquire seasonally adjusted data for the area.

- Hammond lost 400 jobs from June 2017, but is up 800 jobs from July 2016.

Not seasonally adjusted MSA and individual parish data for July 2017 will be released on August 25, 2017.

Seasonally adjusted data are useful for comparisons among states and the nation. Not seasonally adjusted data are useful for comparing trends in parishes and metropolitan statistical areas, and for comparing them to the state. To view all available employment data, visit Louisiana's employment homepage at <http://www.laworks.net> and select Labor Market Information from the top-right menu. Then, select LOIS (Louisiana Occupational Information System) and select Employment and Wage Data listed under Data Trends. To view the BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics for the state, visit <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/querytool.jsp?survey=la>. For BLS nonfarm employment data, click here: <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/querytool.jsp?survey=sm>.

***Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) Revision**

BLS information released to the public on the approved date should be considered preliminary data. Once the data is released, some of the information may be revised based upon additional data. For all up-to-date information, reference [LWC's Tableau Public website](#). Or, please direct calls to the LWC media line at (225) 342-3035.

Initial data released on July 21, 2017 indicated a seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 5.5 percent. That has since been revised down to 5.4 percent based on additional data.

Resources for employers and job seekers

Job-seekers can explore careers, apply for top-rated jobs and connect with local training providers using Louisiana Star Jobs, the LWC's free career tool, at <http://www.laworks.net/Stars/>. Employers looking for workers should visit Louisiana's employment homepage at www.laworks.net. Click on HiRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) and create an account allowing access to qualified job seekers.

About the Louisiana Workforce Commission

The Louisiana Workforce Commission is an agency of state government that administers programs designed to enhance workforce growth and provide family-sustaining jobs for Louisiana residents. The commission monitors employment, administers unemployment compensation and tax funds, provides training resources for employers and employees and oversees worker compensation benefits. The agency also gathers and supplies information on the labor market and occupational sectors in Louisiana.

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